

Harm Reduction Tips to Encourage Patients to Use Smokeless Cannabis

Dried, Activated, Oil-Free, Cannabis Capsules for Legal Patients with access to “shake”

Assemble: dried cannabis shake, working oven, food processor, coffee bean grinder, baking dish, serving dish, capsule making kit with capsules, capsule containers and labels.

1. For economy, separate leaf/trim/shake or immature/harsh/low-grade bud for making dried activated capsules. Although untested, male plants should work too. Dry the low-grade cannabis until very dry. You can cure your high-grade smoothest tasting bud and save it for your vaporizer.
2. Preheat oven to 225F in BAKE mode. **WARNING:** Be certain the oven works so is at the proper temperature before adding cannabis. Test with an oven thermometer in an empty dish if you don't trust your oven accuracy. If the oven gets too hot, you will vaporize your cannabis, which removes the medicine. At 446F, you can ignite cannabis so keep the temperature below 250F always.
3. Using the very dry shake, do a long primary grind in a food processor. Take this rougher grind out of the food processor and do a secondary grind in a coffee bean grinder for about 15 to 30 seconds. The fine grind allows for about 0.4 grams of cannabis per double 0 (00) capsule with a tamping tool with less capsule breakage and maybe better absorption of the very fine grind or dust.
4. Transfer the cannabis dust to a baking dish (with or without cover). Rake the cannabis dust with a fork to get it evenly distributed on the bottom of the dish and remove stems and fiber. Cover the dish only to eliminate any mild terpene smell or if using a convection oven to prevent blowing cannabis dust. Otherwise, there is only a slight terpene-cannabis smell in the kitchen.
5. In your oven you pre-heated to 225F and are certain will NEVER get above 250F, place the cannabis dust dish for 20 to 60 minutes or longer. Sources say 10 minutes at 210 to 220F will decarboxylate (remove the carbon dioxide or -COOH or -CO₂) from the raw cannabis and make it more potent. The extra time is so all the cannabis - including the middle part – gets evenly hot.
6. While the cannabis is activating, set up your capsule rack such as one from www.cap-m-quik.com or sold at health food stores. A capsule rack for 50 double-0 (00) capsules works well but one can use smaller capsules like a single 0 (0) to make pills easier to swallow or deliver a smaller dose especially if using more potent cannabis (like bud instead of shake). Vegetarian capsules work fine because there is no oil in this recipe. Oil will dissolve a vegetarian capsule.
7. Remove the hot baking dish with the now activated cannabis from the oven and pour or spoon it into a room temperature serving dish that won't burn the capsule maker.
8. Make the capsules from the dried activated finely ground cannabis just like you would from any dried ground herb. The instructions for legal herbs are at www.cap-m-quik.com. With the tamping tool to pack or tamp the capsules you can raise the amount of cannabis contained in one 00 capsule

from about 0.2 grams to about 0.4 grams or roughly double the dose per capsule. Label container to avoid confusion because the capsules usually have no cannabis odor.

9. Talk to your doctor about dosage but as a general rule, “start low and go slow”. The ideal dose will depend on the patient and the condition. One can easily decrease dose by dumping out, not tamping, or using smaller capsules. For Marinol® or cannabis-experienced patients, an average starting dose might be one double 0 (00) size capsules every 4 to 6 hours as needed for pain or spasm. Caps work faster (30 to 60 minutes) and better if taken on an empty stomach meaning 1 hour before eating or 2 hours after eating. With a big glass of water and empty stomach, any capsule gets absorbed faster with less risk of belching, heartburn, or bad aftertaste problems.

10. Herbal capsules may have less adverse effects than pure THC capsules (like dronabinol or Marinol®). Otherwise, adverse reactions are identical to those listed at www.marinol.com

More Efficient Use of Vaporizers (particularly the Volcano) for Legal Patients

1. Use properly dried and stored cannabis. Place a small bud or part of a large one in an herb grinder and give it enough turns to get a rough grind that will increase surface area to expose more trichomes to the heat. Avoid too fine a grind that could fall through the screen into the heating unit.
2. Dump the rough grind from your herb grinder onto a playing card or similar material for carefully placing it into a small glass spice container for short-term storage. Use the ground herb soon (weeks to months) because exposed surface area also means faster decay of medicine.
3. One secret to maximum efficiency is to actually **MEASURE** dosage of your herb. A good starting place is a level one-quarter teaspoon (1/4 tsp.) since most of us have one of these measuring spoons in the kitchen. This is around 0.2 grams. If you always measure your dosage (instead of just guess), you will likely use less bud and get a better idea of your dosage requirements. You will also waste less medicine because the lesser quantity of herb in the heating chamber of your vaporizer allows heat to more evenly distribute for optimal vaporization temperatures and optimum efficiency of your vaporizer. Recording your dosage can help with your medical care.
4. Between vaporizing episodes, stir the herb to make sure the entire herbal dosage gets heated uniformly so there is no waste. Dry, “crumble-to-dust” tan herb is normal after vaporizing. Moist, sticky green herb after vaporizing means you are not vaporizing all the medicine. Burnt ash means you are burning or combusting your cannabis. For proper temperatures and more general information, refer to your vaporizer manual or www.alternativesmagazine.com/31/bayer.html